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PROBLEMS IN FITTING THE SUCTION SOCKET

CTION:

In the early cases fitted in any area, considerable anxiety was expressed over maintaining suction, and suction was usually maintained by keeping the fit of the socket too tight. The steps outlined in Figure 6 of the brochure should be carefully followed to insure the proper fit at the top of the socket. If this is done, the fit of the rest of the socket can be relatively loose. Any case in which there is excessive difficulty in pulling the sock off the lower part of the stump, or any case in which edema develops, has too tight a fit and this should be corrected.

2. CAUSES OF EDEMA:

One of the commonest causes of edema is an oval shaped stump fitted into a round socket. If the shape of the portion of the stump below the brim of the socket is estimated by having the patient tense his muscles, it will usually be found to be oval. If the socket is then made to conform to this shape, edema can be usually relieved.

3. EDEMA DUE TO GROWTH OF THE STUMP:

Almost every case fitted, after a period of one to three months develops a considerable increase in the size and firmness of the muscles of the stump. This usually comes on so gradually that the patient does not notice it, and the patient should be specifically warned that any swelling or hardness of the end of the stump indicates that this growth has occurred. Either edema of the end of the stump or very high negative pressure readings when the patient lifts his leg from the floor and tenses the muscles of the stump, are an indication of this stump growth. Negative pressure readings over two and one half pounds to the square inch indicate that the fit is too tight. The upper portion of the socket usually needs to be enlarged only slightly over some of the more prominent muscles. In the lower portion of the socket, a considerable amount of wood must be removed until the fit is loose and the edema disappears.

4. ERRORS OF ALIGNMENT:

Errors of Alignment are demonstrated in Figure 12 of the brochure. It should be emphasized that these errors can only be demonstrated while the patient is walking and that during this test no webbing belt of any kind should be worn, since this will merely mask the errors.

5. ERRORS OF FIT:

The commonest errors of fit at the top of the socket are indicated in Figure 13 of the brochure. It cannot be emphasized too strongly that the socket must fit the particular stump, and any variations in the musculature of the stump must be taken into consideration. The shape of the socket as demonstrated in the brochure is intended only as an initial guide, and any variations from this shape which are necessary may be made.

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